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NEW RECORDS OF THE GENUS *FESTUCA* L. (POACEAE) FOR COLOMBIA AND VENEZUELA

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The genus *Festuca* L. (Poaceae) includes about 350-400 herbaceous species with wide cosmopolitan distribution (Watson & Dallwitz 1992). The center of distribution of the genus is in the meadows and steppes of North America and Eurasia. Some species are present in Australia, Tasmania, New Zealand, and W and SE Africa. High species diversity is found in the pampas of Aargentina and the puna of the Andes, with approximately 40 species in Peru (Tovar 1993), 30 in Bolivia (Renvoize 1998), and 30 in Argentina (Türpe 1969). So far, 26 native species are known from the páramos of the northern South America; about seven new species from this region will be described soon (author's unpublished data).

As a result of extensive field work as well as the revision of numerous herbarium collections, the presence of eleven species of *Festuca* – of a total of 19 mentioned in the literature (Hitchcock 1927, Saint-Yves 1927, Pinto-Escobar 1966, 1986, Swallen 1948, Alexeev 1984, 1986, Davidse 1994, Luteyn 1999, Rangel 2000) – was confirmed for Colombia. These species are: *F. andicola* Kunth, *F. arundinacea* Schreb. (introduced), *F. asplundii* E. Alexeev, *F. azucarica* E. Alexeev, *F. caldasii* (Kunth) Kunth, *F. cleefiana* E. Alexeev, *F. colombiana* E. Alexeev, *F. cundinamarcea* E. Alexeev, *F. procera* Kunth, *F. reclinata* Swallen, *F. subulifolia* Benth. The species *Festuca dolichophylla* Presl and *F. vaginalis* (Benth) Lægaard are not present in Colombia and the use of these names for Colombian specimens is incorrect. The type locality of *F. presliana* Hitchc. is still unclear (N. America, Peru or Colombia). Three additional species, all introduced from Europe, belong to the genus *Vulpia* (*V. australis* Nees ex Steud., *V. dertonensis* (All.) Ascher & Graebn., *V. megalura* Nutt). Two of the published names are synonyms: *F. breviaristata* Pilger (= *F.subulifolia*) and *F. eminens* Kunth (= *F. caldasii*).

There are twelve species of *Festuca* reported from Venezuela (Briceño & Morillo 1994, Anonymus 1998) but five of them actually belong to *Vulpia* and only five species have been confirmed: *F. coromotensis* Briceño, *F. elviae* Briceño, *F. fragilis* (Luces) Briceño, *F. tolucensis* Kunth, and the introduced *F. arundinacea*. The on-going revision of *Festuca* has resulted in three new records for Colombia: *F. fragilis* (Luces) Briceño, *F. sodiroana* Hack. ex E. Alexeev and *F. ulochaeta* Nees ex Steud. The last species is reported for the first time for Venezuela too.

***Festuca fragilis* (Luces) Briceño**, J. Wash. Acad. Sci. 32 (6): 157. 1942.

Distribution and habitat. Up until now, this species was known only from the state of Mérida in Venezuela. In Colombia, it grows in rocky superpáramo, at 4300 m on the Cordillera Oriental.

Specimen studied

COLOMBIA. **Arauca**: Sierra Nevada del Cocuy, Laguna La Plaza, 4300 m, 31 Dec 1985, *Wood 5259* (COL).

***Festuca sodiroana* Hack. ex E. Alexeev**, Bot. Zhurn. 69 (11): 1545. 1984.

Distribution and habitat. *Festuca sodiroana* has been considered endemic to Ecuador (Alexeev 1986, Valencia et al. 2000). In fact, it is widely distributed in Colombia where it has been found in the three cordilleras, at elevation ranges from 2700 to 3600 m. It grows naturally in Andean forests but has spread into disturbed areas where it grows in the shade.

Specimens studied

COLOMBIA. **Antioquia**: Urrao, Llano Grande, 3520 m, 10 Sep 1986, *Roldán et al. 360* (HUA). Urrao, Páramo Frontino, 3500-3800 m, 3 Mar 1989, *Roldán et al. 4504* (HUA). **Cauca**: Macizo Colombiano, páramo de Las Papas, 2910 m, 11 Sep 1958, *Idrobo & Bischler 3026* (COL). PNN Puracé, near San Juan, 3100-3300 m, 6 Apr 1985, *Wood 4792* (COL). **Cundinamarca**: Páramo de Tablazo, 3200 m, 8 Apr 1984, *Wood 4347* (COL, FMB). **Nariño**: Santiago, páramo Bordoncillo, 1°11′N-77° 06′W, 3200-3400 m, 4 Apr 1992, *Alberto et al. 144* (COL), *146* (COL). Volcano Cumbal, 3600 m, 8 Mar 1999, *Stancik 2754* (COL, PRC, PSO). Volcano Doña Juana, 2900 m, 18 Mar 1999, *Stancik 2902* (COL, PRC, PSO). Volcano Azufral, 3500 m, 9 Apr 1999, *Stancik 2772* (COL, PRC, PSO). El Encano, Lagoon La Cocha, 3100 m, 23 Mar 1999, *Stancik 2991* (COL, PRC, PSO). **Norte de Santander**: between Pamplona and Mutiscua, 2700 m, 1 Apr 1984, *Wood 4326* (COL, FMB). **Santander**: California, Valle California, 2800 m, 14 Sep 1985, *Wood 5066* (FMB). **Tolima**: Nevado del Tolima, 3400 m, 16 Dec 1984, *Wood 4648* (COL, FMB). Nevado del Tolima, El Rancho, 400 m, 7-8 Jun 2000, *Stancik 3595* (COL, PRC).

***Festuca ulochaeta* Nees ex Steud.**, Syn. Pl. Gram. 1: 305. 1854.

Distribution and habitat. Known from SE Brazil and NE Argentina. The data published from Ecuador, Peru, and Bolivia (Hitchcock 1927, Tovar 1993) refer to different species. Recently found in Colombia in the region of Bogotá (Cordillera Oriental) and in Venezuela (Andes of Mérida and Aragua States). *Festuca ulochaeta* grows in humid forests, forest clearings and river margins, but has also spread into disturbed areas. It has been reported as growing at altitudes between 500-2200 m in Argentina and Brazil. In Colombia and Venezuela it is found between 2600 and 3300 m altitude.

Specimens studied

COLOMBIA. **Cundinamarca**: Páramo del Tablazo, W of Subachoque, 3100 m, 1983, *Wood 3842* (COL, FMB). Between La Calera and Choachí, 1 km above Mundo Nuevo, 2600 m, 14 Oct 1985, *Wood 5104* (COL).
VENEZUELA. **Aragua**: Trayecto Colonia Tovar, El Lagunazo, 2100 m, Feb 1953, *Aristeguieta 763* (VEN). **Mérida**: Lagoon La Coromoto, 08°36′01.6″N-71°01′28.3″W, 3000-3100 m, 6-7 Nov 2000, *Stancik 4177* (CAR, COL, PRC). Lagoon La Coromoto, 08°36′26.6″N-71°01′33.4″W, 2800-3000 m, 6-7 Nov 2000, *Stancik 4179* (CAR, COL, PRC). Lagoon La Coromoto, 3200-3300 m, 3 Jul 1987, *Briceño et al. 2011* (personal herbarium).

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